

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-37 remain in the application.

The Examiner objected to the title of the invention on the ground that it is not descriptive of the invention to which the claims are directed. To comply with this requirement, the title has been changed to "Method of Selecting a Light Redirecting Film" as suggested by the Examiner. Also the Abstract has been rewritten to concisely describe the steps included in the claimed method as further required by the Examiner.

The Examiner objected to the drawings and specification on the ground that some reference characters have been used to designate different parts in different embodiments of the invention. Applicants' attorney disagrees, in that these reference characters are used to identify the same part in different embodiments of the invention, not different parts. Nevertheless, to comply with this requirement, the specification has been amended to include prime symbols after the reference characters used to identify the same or like parts in the different embodiments of the invention. Because of the number of amendments, both a clean version and a marked-up version of the specification showing all the changes are enclosed herewith, including the changes to the title of the invention and the Abstract. Also replacement drawing sheets are enclosed herewith which have been amended to conform to the changes made in the reference characters in the specification. Accordingly, withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 10, 12-15, 18-21, 29, 30, 32-34 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over both Ashall (U.S. Patent 5,390,436) and Parker et al (U.S. Patent 5,618,096). The

Examiner acknowledges that both of these references fail to disclose the claimed method of selecting a light redirecting film (or optical panel), but contends it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made would have recognized the claimed method as inherently disclosed by the structural limitations of the illumination devices of the cited references. Alternatively, the Examiner contends that even if the particular method presented by the claims is not considered as inherently disclosed by the patented structure of the cited references, such method would have been considered an obvious matter of design choice as required by the specific requirements of a particular application, such method having no impact on the final structure or characteristics of the claimed optical film. According to the Examiner, support for such finding of non-criticality of the method is found in the applicants' own description, which the Examiner states is silent as to the advantages of one method over another and makes no mention at all of a particular method of selecting the light redirecting film.

However, with this rejection applicants' attorney does not agree, since the present application specifically discloses on page 14, lines 6-10 (paragraph 0061) of the original specification that where the light redirecting film has a pattern of optical elements thereon that varies along the length of the film, a roll of the film may be provided having a repeating pattern of optical elements thereon as schematically shown in Fig. 15 to permit a selected area of the pattern that best suits a particular application to be die cut from the roll of film. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that neither of these references discloses or suggests a method of selecting a light redirecting film or optical panel for a particular application including the steps of providing a length of film

or substrate having a pattern of optical elements on or in the film or substrate that varies, selecting an area of the pattern that best suits a particular application, and removing the selected area from the film or substrate to provide the light redirecting film or optical panel as recited in these claims. Accordingly, these claims are submitted as clearly allowable.

Claims 3, 4, 7, 11, 17, 22, 23, 26, 31 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashall in view of Mizobe (U.S. Patent 5,641,219). According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to vary the pattern of Ashall along the width of the film (as recited in claims 3 and 22), or both the length and width of the film (as recited in claims 4 and 23) to compensate for the distribution of light across the surface of the light source and further increase the uniformity of the light produced by the film of Ashall, as per the teachings of Mizobe (column 4, lines 24-40). Also according to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to orient at least some of the optical elements of Ashall at different angles on the film (as recited in claims 17 and 36) to compensate for the angular displacement as well as the longitudinal displacement of the optical elements with respect to the location of the light source, to even further increase the uniformity of the light produced by the film, as per the teachings of Mizobe (column 4, lines 59-65). However, claims 3, 4 and 7 depend from claim 1, claims 11 and 17 depend from claim 10, claims 22, 23 and 26 depend from claim 20 and claims 31 and 36 depend from claim 30 and are submitted as allowable for substantially the same reasons. Moreover, Mizobe is equally deficient in failing to disclose or suggest applicants' novel claimed method of selecting a light redirecting film or optical panel for a particular application. Thus it is respectfully submitted that the

Examiner has combined these references in light of applicants' present teachings and certainly not from any teachings or suggestions found in the cited references, which is clearly improper. Moreover, nowhere do these references disclose or suggest a repeating pattern on the film or substrate as further recited in claims 7, 11, 26 and 31. Accordingly, these claims are further submitted as allowable in their own right in addition to being dependent on other allowable claims.

Claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 24, 25, 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashall. The Examiner admits that Ashall does not disclose a film formed in a roll (as recited in claims 5, 8, 24 and 27); the selected area being removed from the film roll (as recited in claims 5, 8, 24 and 27); and the selected area being die-cut from the length of the film (as recited in claims 6, 9, 25 and 28). Nevertheless, the Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to form the film in a roll (as recited in claims 5, 8, 24 and 27) with the selected area being removed from the film roll (as recited in claims 5, 8, 24 and 27) by die-cutting (as recited in claims 6, 9, 25 and 28). In support, the Examiner alleges that such method of forming and cutting films is not only old and well known, but standard in the art, and that one would have been motivated to be able to form such film in a continuous strip easy to store and transport, and from which strip desired shapes and sizes could be cut. However, with this contention applicants' attorney does not agree. Moreover, the facts in the record must support the legal conclusion of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Merely stating that applicants' claimed method is obvious without adequate factual support is clearly insufficient. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, this application is now believed to be in condition for final allowance of all of the pending claims 1-37, and early action to that end is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner disagree with applicants' attorney in any respect, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicants' attorney in an effort to resolve such differences.

In the event that an extension of time is necessary, this should be considered a petition for such an extension. If required, fees are enclosed for the extension of time and/or for the presentation of new and/or amended claims. In the event any additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this reply, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 18-0988 (Attorney Docket GLOLP0114USA).

Respectfully submitted,

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